

New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report

Spaulding Youth Center

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Draft Report

Evaluation Conducted on October 21 and 22, 1997

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New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report

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(Commendations, Citations, and Suggestions for each program)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The private facility is not mandated to implement them.*

New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Summary Evaluation Report

Spaulding Youth Center

I. INTRODUCTION:

A New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval visit was conducted at Spaulding Youth Center. The on-site team met on October 21 and 22, 1997, in order to review the status of Special Education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the application materials, which were submitted by the school, and a check of teaching certifications of special education personnel. In addition, interviews were held with the principal, special education teachers, parents and related service personnel as availability permitted. The team also randomly inspected and reviewed student files from the school, including the file of a student who falls under the James O' Consent Decree. Throughout the visit the team had full cooperation from the school personnel, which was greatly appreciated.

The report that you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of the visiting team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the N.H. State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no exceptions to the Standards found in that particular area.

II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE: *Conducted on November 2-3, 1993*

Based on review of the previous program approval report and the findings of the team that visited Spaulding Youth Center in October 1997, it was the consensus that staff at Spaulding Youth Center have made a genuine attempt to rectify the citations from the previous program approval visit.

A library has been constructed within the Pangburn School building. There is evidence of a well-balanced variety of print materials (books, reference guides and periodicals). A library aide is available to assist both students and staff. A certified Media Generalist is contracted to provide weekly consultative support and there is evidence of her professional expertise in the proposed plans to add computers, relevant software, on-line access and other curriculum related items. This facility is accessed by the students in the ED program, but not by the students in the Neurobehavioral Program (previously known as the Autistic Unit).

There has been a significant effort toward appropriately certifying staff. Contracted certified consultants have been contracted in the areas of music and art. Spaulding Youth Center has also allocated course reimbursement funds that are available to staff members for continued college course work as they seek certifications through traditional or PEP programs. The teacher in the Neurobehavioral Program's Workshop is in the process of gaining an initial certification through Alternative 4. Other Spaulding staff

II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE, (Con't):

are certified in the area of General Special Education and Elementary Education, with one staff member (Administrative Assistant/Substitute to the Pangburn School) carrying EH, MR and LD certifications. The physical education teacher is appropriately certified. There are no certified guidance counselors, but there are clinical social workers that provide counseling.

The IEP format has been redesigned since the previous program approval visitation. The present format does allow for all components of the IEP to be addressed, however, the IEP's reviewed did not fully describe the services students were receiving and were not as comprehensive as such plans should be for students requiring such significant support. Counseling goals are addressed in an attached Treatment Plan, but the dates and signatures are not necessarily consistent with the IEP. There is little evidence of related services in the areas of Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy or Physical Therapy. Length of the school year and determination of extended school year programming are documented in an unusual manner, with the length of a typical school year running 238 days or more.

The Pangburn School offers instructional programming to students identified as emotionally disabled. The small group instruction offered in each of the program's four classrooms appeared to be well designed with appropriate age and grade level materials and instructional components. There are computers available to students in the ED Program. A working computer was not available to the students in the Neurobehavioral Program. Instruction in the Neurobehavioral Program was provided individually with little evidence of group work or a comprehensive, developmentally based curriculum plan. Individual and group therapy is offered once a week from a speech and language consultant. At present, there is no physical or occupational therapy provided on a regular, consistent basis. Educational programming offered to the workshop students appears to be undeveloped and staff is unclear about curriculum goals and objectives.

The processing rooms, used for "time-out" purposes at the Pangburn School, have been improved to provide for appropriate ventilation and safety. The Neurobehavioral Program reports that they do not utilize processing rooms for their students.

Both the Neurobehavioral Program and the Pangburn School currently offer physical education programming to students provided by a certified staff member. The age range in each classroom is appropriate.

III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The visiting team was favorably impressed with the enthusiasm, caring and dedication of the Spaulding staff. The team consistently reported that staff expressed positive feelings about their roles and about the students they worked with. The school-wide behavior program is well established. All staff and students are familiar with the system, insuring a good degree of individual student success. The Pangburn School offers an atmosphere that is conducive for learning. Students were focused, involved and interested in their instruction. However, there is presently no utilization of the NH Curriculum Frameworks and students do not participate in the NHEIAP assessment. Adopting the Curriculum Frameworks would provide a consistent structure to curriculum design. Such connection should assist students in maintaining a similar learning experience to that of their schoolmates in the public school community and would ease the transition from Spaulding to a home community.

III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE, (Con't):

Staff assigned to the Neurobehavioral Program are enthusiastic and interested in their work with their students. Of concern to the team, however, is the lack of a diagnostic/prescriptive model of therapeutic programming that would be of benefit to this significantly impaired population. There are no related service providers on staff. The program contracts one day a week with a speech and language pathologist who provides direct service to students. She presently brings her own materials to the program and recommends that the school look into purchasing updated assessment tools and relevant speech and language materials for the program. There is no regular participation from either an occupational therapist or a physical therapist, although staff indicate that such consultation is available as needed. A developmental pediatrician is available to the program staff one day every other week. The complex needs of these students would benefit from a strong teaming approach in the areas of developing appropriate instruction and therapy, monitoring progress, and in the area of transition planning and implementation. Students were observed in parallel activities with little or no group interaction evident.

Placements at Spaulding are most often court ordered. Spaulding staff have shown a good effort at consistently pursuing all necessary records and reports from sending school districts, as well as requesting participation at planning and placement meetings by district staff. Their efforts are notable and are well documented. The two parents interviewed expressed satisfaction at the reliable communication between school and home. They both felt that their children were doing well in their present placements.

The Pangburn School and the Neurobehavioral programs function as very separate systems. There appears to be little or no sharing of resources (staff consultations and expertise as well as materials and space). In a facility as small and isolated from the general public community as Spaulding, the team found this separateness to be limiting. However, interviews with administrative staff revealed that a new model of teaming at the leadership level is underway and that the expectation is that success there will assist in restructuring the presently encapsulated systems.

The newly constructed Cutter-Wiggins Cottage has not yet opened as a residence for up to 12 children. The educational component planned for these residents was unclear to the visiting team. Possibilities of including students at the Pangburn School were mentioned by staff, as was the possible plan for tutorial work offered at the Cottage. The program staff need to clarify this matter and submit a proposed educational plan for the Cutter-Wiggins Cottage to the NH Department of Education as soon as possible.

The visiting team found a strong communication component between the residential and school staff. The daily communication is very effective and the team is commended for this exchange. The team also found a consistently positive feeling about the school from all staff.

IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: All Programs

COMENDATIONS:

- Staff were consistently described as caring, involved, dedicated and child centered.
- The utilization of a facility-wide behavior management program is successful in providing a reliable consistency for the students. The result of the comprehensive program is that students appear to feel a sense of safety and in turn are able to develop more positive behaviors.
- The buildings and grounds are well maintained and clean.
- Professional growth opportunities for staff are encouraged by the administration. Staff Development opportunities and financial assistance is available.
- There is a good system of communication between residential and educational staff.
- Parents interviewed indicate satisfaction with the communication from staff and the programming their children are receiving.
- The administration is commended for it's work toward developing a management team approach to leadership and for the plans to consider improved systems for restructuring existing school systems of communication and service delivery.
- The enrichment activities offered by the Very Special Arts programs are commendable and the results of the student artwork add a special dimension to the school facilities.
- The outward-bound experiential program is available to all students at least once every two weeks. This program appears to be very successful in including all students in exciting experiences and opportunities.

Spaulding Youth Center

PROGRAM: Facility Wide

COMMENDATIONS:

- Spaulding Youth Center is commended for the employment of qualified professionals in every category. All staff are either fully certified/licensed or are in approved programs of professional preparation

CITATIONS: **Staff Qualifications**

Ed #1133.08(a) 1 file: 2 staff members need to complete the requirements for licensure as Marriage/Family Therapist. 1 social worker needs to complete requirements for Certified Clinical Social Worker. Denise Doyle, Julia Jackson and Elizabeth Knowlton need to complete the requirements for teacher of the Emotionally Disturbed. 1 staff member needs to have her Masters Degree program approved by the Dept. of Ed. as an Act IV Certification. One counselor needs to have a written statement of his supervising relationships with a licensed psychotherapist.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Spaulding staff should begin a discussion with sending school districts regarding the process for administering the NH Assessments for students in grades 3 and 6. It is strongly suggested that documentation of any decisions regarding participation in NHIEAP testing be documented in the student's IEP.
- As both the Pangburn School and the Neurobehavioral Programs continue their cycle of curriculum review and development, the team recommends that staff utilize the NH Curriculum Frameworks as a basis for planning and writing of curriculum for each program.
- As the management team at Spaulding continues to review and evaluate systems within the facility, it is suggested that a more integrated philosophy be considered to take full advantage of all staff and program resources. Specifically, the use of the library at the Pangburn School should be made available to the students from the Neurobehavioral Program. Similarly, students could benefit from interaction with each other. Computers and other materials appeared to be more available to the students at the Pangburn School and again, where resources may be limited, it would make sense to assess the possibility of sharing such equipment, materials and staff expertise.

SUGGESTIONS (Con't):

- IEP's should be developed to fully include the array of educational and related services that students require. The records reviewed describe limited related services in the IEP. Counseling goals do appear in a Treatment Plan but it is unclear that those goals are considered to be part of the student's educational plan. In several educational plans the students were receiving related services in the sending district but such services were dropped when the new Spaulding IEP was developed. While this is not a citation, as team members agreed to the new proposed IEP, it is the suggestion of the visiting team that such related services continue to be made available at the same level that student's were receiving prior to placement at Spaulding. More fully developed goals and objectives should also be developed to address the full education plan. Also, the length of the school year should reflect a regular school year and the extended school year program should be separate and clearly differentiated from the regular school year. IEP's should also reflect that students are being provided instruction in art, music, PE, health and any other subjects in which they are enrolled.
- Transition planning for students needs to be strengthened and outlined as a component in IEP's.
- The staff is encouraged to consider a renewal of relationships with sending school districts to increase the districts level of commitment to the timely completion of appropriate paperwork (records, updated evaluations, etc) participation in student staffings, greater participation in transition work, and a greater understanding of the Spaulding Programs.

Spaulding Youth Center

PROGRAM: 1) Emotional Disability Program

COMMENDATIONS:

- A caring staff who are nurturing and helpful.
- Excellent organization of records.
- There is a small student to teacher ratio.
- OUCH program provides “real life” teamwork and problem solving activities.
- Consistent cueing sequence for acting-out behavior in classrooms. Students know expectations/consequences for behavior.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.06 1 file: Evaluation summary was missing.

Ed #1109.01 1 file: The IEP specifies the length of the school year as 238 days. No documentation to support ESY. No evidence of evaluation criteria for IEP objectives. No evidence of individuals/service providers responsible for implementing the IEP. Counseling goals are not on IEP, but instead on treatment plan.

Ed #1109.01 1 file: The IEP did not contain goals for counseling. Items of significance in district IEP omitted from Spaulding IEP (e.g. written language in school not in Spaulding. No evidence of evaluation criteria. Service provider was not listed. No goals for OUCH program, which is part of the regular special ed. program.

Ed #1109.03 2 files: No indication that LEA rep. was included in meeting.

Ed #1119.03 Staff has limited knowledge of Curriculum Frameworks.

Ed #1123.14 1 file: The file did not contain evidence of record of disclosure.

Ed #1133.05(c,f,g)

1 file: The IEP was developed prior to receiving IEP from school district.
No evidence of lesson plans with goals/objectives.

1 file: No documentation to support ESY. Spaulding unilaterally assigns days beyond the normal 180, which seems to be based on programming which is continuous, not on student need.

1 file: IEP from sending district not received prior to Spaulding IEP & evaluations. Lessons plans are lists, rather than plans.

Ed #1133.06(d)

1 file: No evidence of progress reports including attendance in file.

34CFR 300.307

1 file: A special PE program is offered, but it is not documented on the student's IEP. There is a discrepancy between the Manchester IEP and Spaulding's IEP. No speech/language and OT provided for this student.

1 file: no evidence of adaptive PE goals.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Establish an early relationship with the school district to expedite receipt of needed documents.
- Increased dialogue with Special Education Directors and NH Department of Education is encouraged for information and ongoing exchange of ideas.
- A review of IEP and Treatment Plans is suggested, perhaps looking at merging the two.
- Curriculum renewal should be in alignment with the NH Frameworks. Student participation in NHEIAP testing should be considered.
- Quarterly observations and increased supervision of teachers is suggested.(i.e. written evaluation, a check of lesson plans, etc.)
- The classrooms would benefit from updated materials and computers. An increase in space for programs and storage is recommended.
- Consider any available opportunity to integrate students with other members of the Spaulding community as well as the community at large.
- Transition planning should consider various methods of offering gradual re-integration back into the mainstream of both the public school community and the community at large .

Spaulding Youth Center

PROGRAM: Neurobehavioral Program

COMMENDATIONS:

- Staff are wonderfully caring, experienced, well qualified and very enthusiastic. They are very involved and develop good relationships with students.
- Teacher rotation, which allows all teachers to become familiar with every child is an excellent practice.
- The behavior management program is consistent and effective.
- Staff seems to be aware of how progress of students is reported and collected.

CITATIONS:

<u>Ed #1107.06</u>	1 file: No evidence of written summary of evaluation.
<u>Ed #1107.08</u>	1 file: Did not find evidence of request of missing information from the sending school district.
<u>Ed #1109.01</u>	1 file: IEP includes projected dates and duration but is for 365 days a year. ESY needs to be separated out.
<u>Ed #1113.01</u>	1 file: Did not find evidence of a vocational evaluation.
<u>Ed #1119.07(c)(c3)</u>	1 file: Paraprofessional (teacher associate) does design instructional methods and what to work on. They do assume the role/responsibility of a teacher.
<u>Ed #1123.05</u>	1 file: No evidence that LEA sent a copy of ASP. No evidence indicating parent received notification of rights.
<u>Ed #1123.14</u>	2 file: No evidence of record of disclosure found in file.
<u>Ed #1125.04</u>	2 files: No evidence of consent to evaluate provided by LEA. No evidence of WPN to parents.

PROGRAM: Neurobehavioral Program

CITATIONS, (Con't):

- Ed #1133.05(d) 1 file: The neurobehavioral program should provide a full array of educational tools and equipment to assist staff in implementing all aspects of each child's IEP (i.e. Speech/Language materials, computers, and curriculum-related material).
- Ed #1133.05(g) 1 file: The neurobehavioral educational staff do not write fully developed lesson plans.
- Ed #1133.05(h) 1 file: The neurobehavioral program does not provide all students with educational disabilities access to equal educational opportunities.
- Ed #1133.07(a) 1 file: Teacher not aware of an overall description of written policies and procedures concerning behavior management.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Consider the addition of related staff to provide OT, PT, Speech /Language services, as well as a Behavior Specialist for the Neuro-behavioral unit. In the interim increase the use of contracted services.
- Encourage staff to stay current on behavior intervention techniques as well as teaching strategies. Will the techniques and strategies used here for behaviors be useful for home/school when transitioned? Is there a way to gradually reduce restrictions that will allow for a better transition?
- IEP should be reviewed for length of school year and school day, projected dates and duration of services and signatures from LEA representative.
- Input from a vocational consultant to help staff with instruction and generating ideas is encouraged.
- The use of more extensive lesson plans to include instructional methods and instructional goals/objectives rather than weekly schedules is recommended.
- Review the certifications of staff to check for appropriateness of instructing these students and/or increase use of consultants.
- Increase communication between administration and the on-line staff, encourage communication to flow both ways.
- Review salaries for all staff (including teaching associates). Many staff members are working 2nd full time jobs in order to "live". This could lead to problems with burnout, morale and safety.
- Ensure that workshop staff are aware of curriculum guideline/framework. There appears to be a lack of curriculum development for workshop staff.
- Team consultations should develop fully comprehensive services for each student, including post-Spaulding activities (i.e. jobs) in order to increase consistency of services and increase the relevancy of services provided.

PROGRAM:

1) Neurobehavioral Program

SUGGESTIONS, (Con't):

- Staff need to be made fully aware of school's admission policies and procedures, written procedures for medical illness, injury or emergency.
- Curriculum in NB program needs to be re-evaluated and re-designed to meet educational needs of individual children. At present, curriculum consists of IEP goals only with no overall curriculum in evidence. Transition plans are needed for students going back into local school districts. This process needs to follow state curriculum as much as possible.
- Goals for therapy/counseling should be included in the IEP.
- Continue to provide opportunities for staff to visit other facilities and receive training outside of Spaulding.
- Increased participation in community activities for students is encouraged (i.e. little league, activities at local public schools). Increase the opportunities for integration /mainstreaming.
- Consider integrating programs within Spaulding Youth Center. This would allow for the all resources to be shared.
- Train a staff member in the role of speech assistant and liaison with speech pathologist.

ADDENDUM

JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM

Spaulding Youth Center

Student File Review

Case Study Document

Reimbursement Claim Form

Case Study Addendum Form

<p style="text-align: center;">ADDENDUM JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</p>

Spaulding Youth Center

PROGRAM: James O' Files

COMMENDATIONS:

- Staff is commended for their hard work and dedication to the students.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.02(.03)(.05) 1 file: No information available from sending school district.

Ed #1109.01(a) 1 file: No documented academic levels, goals or objectives. The IEP consisted of behavioral/therapeutic goals.

Ed #1109.01(n) 1 file: Sending school district did not sign IEP.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Write academic goals and objectives in the IEP rather than the treatment plan.